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For the Record
May 10, 2017 in
Hot Springs, SD.

EPA PUBLIC HEARING
WRITTEN COMMENT CARD

Name: Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

Email:

Comments: Enclosed two "letters to the editor" from local individuals opposed to the uranium mining in this area.

Also - The Unexpected: The future is important. Here is a recent example of a disastrous event, unexpected. The event was caused by old gas wells lost over time in Colorado. The consequences to Colorado is also reported.

Colorado considers statewide gas-well map after deadly blast

KRISTEN WYATT
Associated Press

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Workers dismantle the charred remains of a home May 4 at the location where an unrefined petroleum industry gas line leak explosion killed two people inside their home, in Firestone, Colo. Two state lawmakers have proposed a bill to force energy drillers to provide state regulators the locations of all their gas lines.

DENVER — Colorado lawmakers are considering the nation's first statewide gas well map requirement in response to a deadly home explosion traced to an inactive line.

The proposal would force energy drillers to provide state regulators the locations of all their gas lines, a national first. A Democratic House committee approved the idea 6-3 Friday.

The measure is inspired by a home explosion that killed two people last month in Firestone, a small town in northern Colorado. The April 17 blast was traced to gas seeping from an old severed underground pipeline, called a flow line.

The well was drilled in 1993. State records show it was shut down all of last year and resumed production in January, although the records do not show the reasons.

"This transparency has never been more urgent. We simply cannot go on this way," said Sophia Guerrero-Murphy of Conservation Colorado, an environmental group that supports the bill.

But the measure faces long odds of becoming law.

First, Colorado oil-and-gas regulators have already ordered safety reviews of the state's 54,000 wells, with additional testing over the next two months. And the bill doesn't address old well lines whose owners are out of business.

Colorado has a Democratic House and a Republican Senate, making bipartisan agreement crucial for any measure. That bipartisan agreement seemed elusive Friday, with some Republicans calling the proposal a knee-jerk reaction that won't improve well safety.

"This is about politics. It's not about safety," said Republican Rep. Lori Saine, who is from Firestone.

The state Legislature has just three working days left — the minimum amount of time that a bill can pass and head to the governor's desk. And Democratic Gov. John Hickenlooper, a former geologist, told reporters Wednesday that improved well maps are important but may be better kept by county and local authorities, not state regulators.

"I don't think it's unreasonable to want to know where those lines are. I'm not compelled that it's got to be the state that controls that," Hickenlooper said.

A representative of the administration testified Friday that the state agency overseeing drilling regulators is neutral on the bill.

Supporters insisted the state shouldn't wait for regulators' safety checks to demand comprehensive mapping.

"People have no way of knowing what's going on, what's near their homes.... I think that's important," said Democratic Rep. Adrienne Benavidez.

Marijuana found stashed in shipment of Ford Fusions

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NOGALES, Ariz. — A shipment of Ford Fusions traveling by rail from Mexico to Minnesota has been found to have marijuana hidden inside the vehicles.

the other 13.

Each of the first two cars had 40 pounds of marijuana molded into the shape of spare tires and tucked inside plastic wrap, aluminum foil, coffee grounds and garbage

Nogales, Arizona.

Police do not have any suspects, said Steve Linders, a spokesman for the St. Paul, Minnesota, police.

A spokeswoman for Ford said the company is aware of

from Mexico.

Police searched more than 400 other vehicles in the Dilworth rail yard and found 217 pounds of marijuana packaged and sealed to look like spare tires in

May 3, 2017

RAPID CITY JOURNAL

Small gas pipeline blamed for fatal Colorado home explosion

DAN ELLIOTT
Associated Press

FIRESTONE, Colo. — A home explosion that killed two people was caused by unrefined natural gas that was leaking from a small abandoned pipeline from a nearby well, fire officials said.

The April 17 explosion in Firestone about 30 miles north of Denver happened when the odorless gas in the old line leaked into the soil and made its way into the home's basement, Ted Poszywak, chief of the Frederick-Firestone fire department, said Tuesday.

Investigators do not know how or when the small pipe was cut. The house was within 200 feet of the well, and the pipeline was buried about seven feet underground.

The well was drilled in 1993 and is owned by Anadarko Petroleum. Investigators are still trying to determine who is responsible for the abandoned line.

Anadarko and Great Western Oil & Gas said last week they would shut down and inspect more than 3,060 similar wells as a precaution during the investigation.

State records show the well near the home that exploded was shut down all of last year and resumed production in January, although the records do not show the reasons. Anadarko has previously declined to comment, citing the ongoing investigation.

The well was last inspected in 2014 and received a "satisfactory" rating.

Mark Martinez and Joseph William Irwin III were killed in the blast and resulting fire. Erin Martinez, who was married to Mark Martinez, was badly burned. Irwin was her brother.

Anadarko and Great Western's actions prompted nearby Boulder County to ask energy companies to shut down and inspect all vertical wells there, about 300 total. Adams County, which is just south of Firestone, also asked oil and gas companies to inspect vertical wells near occupied buildings, but the county did not call for any wells to be shut down. It wasn't known if any operators complied.

The proximity of subdivisions and wells is a source of contention in Colorado, where fast-growing cities sometimes overlap with lucrative oil and gas fields.

Conflicts have generated lawsuits and attempts to overhaul state rules. The Legislature killed a proposal this year that would have increased the minimum distance between schools and new oil and gas facilities.

The state Oil and Gas Conservation Commission regulates the distance between new oil and gas wells from existing structures, but local governments set the rules for the distance between new homes and existing wells. In Firestone, the minimum distance is 150 feet.

The commission said last week it tested air samples in the neighborhood but found no evidence of leaking gas. The commission also planned to test the soil for evidence of underground leaks. A commission spokesman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday.

Transit

From A1

In September, the city documented 7,691 youth passenger trips, or about 379 trips per day. By April 2017, that figure had risen to 10,522, equal to 585 trips per day.

Rapid Transit System manager Rich Sagen estimated that by the end of the school year his department would provide nearly 90,000 free rides to local students.

"I think it has far exceeded our expectations," he said.

The Rapid Transit System has six fixed routes as well as its door-to-door, dial-a-ride service. Students are picked up along the fixed routes with one de[illegible] for the [illegible] said. Rapid City high schools do [illegible] summer programming," Simons said. "This just gives them a little bit more opportunity to get to [illegible] to continue

CHRIS HUBER, JOURNAL STAFF

A group of high school st[illegible] Rapid Ride bus Tuesday afternoon outside Rapid City S[illegible]

Allender echoed that sentiment before widening his sights even further.

"Some kids are stuck in a house where things aren't there, and we're inviting them to come out and see it this summer."

Contact Samuel Blackstone at

War that began 16 years after Jackson's death. Having, let us fancifully imagine, considered and found unconvincing William Seward's 1858 judgment that the approaching Civil War was "an irrepressible conflict," Trump says:

"People don't realize, you know, the Civil War, if you think about it, why? People don't ask that question, but why was there the Civil War? Why could that one not have been worked out?"

Library shelves groan beneath the weight of books asking questions about that war's origins, so who, one wonders, are these Korea should reciprocate this worry. Yes, a 70-year-old can be callow if he speaks as sophomorically as Trump did when explaining his solution to Middle Eastern terrorism: "I would bomb the s-- out of them. ... I'd blow up the pipes, I'd blow up the refineries, I'd blow up every single inch, there would be nothing left."

As a candidate, Trump did not know what the nuclear triad is. Asked about it, he said: "We have to be extremely vigilant and extremely careful when it comes to nuclear. Nuclear changes the whole ballgame." Invited to elaborate, he said: "Nuclear changes the whole ballgame." Invited to elaborate, he said: "Nuclear changes the whole ballgame." Invited to elab-

of this mind, a presidential discretion that is largely immune to restraint by the Madisonian system of institutional checks and balances. So, it is up to the public to quarantine this presidency by insistently communicating to its elected representatives a steady, rational fear of this man whose combination of impulsivity and credulity render him uniquely unfit to take the nation into a military conflict.

George Will is a nationally syndicated columnist. He can be reached by emailing georgewill@washpost.com.

YOURS May 4, 2017 Rapid City Journal

Why in-situ mining needs many permits

Recently, I have heard two themes in the discussion of the potential for uranium mining in the southwestern Black Hills.

One is that some people believe that the mining has already received a go-ahead, which is far from true. The company that wants to mine in Custer and Fall River counties — Azarga/Powertech — must get at least ten permits of various types before it can begin mining. And to date, they have exactly one — and that one is tied up in court.

LILIAS JARDING

The second theme is that some people, mainly the company, think that the permitting process is too hard. But the number of permits needed is a result of three things.

First, it's a result of our nation's division into counties, states and a federal government. (Each level of government has different responsibilities under our Constitutional system of government.) Second, it is a result of the fact that uranium is both radioactive and toxic, so we need protection from its impacts. And third, the number of permits is a result of the nature of in-situ each uranium mining, which has mpacts on water, land and air.

This type of mining involves huge amounts of water — 9,000 gallons per minute — so it needs permits to use water. The proposed project would pump from two groundwater aquifers, the Inyan Kara and the Madison. The mine would tear up the surface of the ground, so it needs a mining permit. And it can pollute the air, so it needs an air quality permit.

Equally important, this type of mine needs to get rid of wastewater. In this case, the company's first choice is to pump wastewater into the Minnelusa aquifer. Note that the Inyan Kara, Madison and Minnelusa aquifers are our three major drinking water sources in the Black Hills, so it's important that some branch of government tracks the things that go into or out of them.

If the company can't get permission to pump its wastes into our groundwater, then it wants to spray them on the ground. This would impact over 1,000 acres.

So, if the company wasn't threatening our air, land and water to do something that is inherently dangerous, there wouldn't be as much need for permits. Radioactivity is, after all, permanent. And there is no alternative to water. I say if you want to use and pollute our natural resources, there should be a process in place that is designed to protect public health, our economy and our environment.

This is especially urgent when we are dealing with a Canada-based, China-led uranium company whose biggest stockholder (seven of whose leaders are under federal charges for such things as fraud) is based in the Cayman Islands.

It is also especially urgent because the mining industry produces one-third of the nation's total toxic pollution, and taxpayers end up holding the bag when companies go bankrupt — which happens regularly, as the history of the Black Hills shows.

Luckily, in one case, each of us has the opportunity to be part of the permit process — when the Environmental Protection Agency holds public comment hearings on May 8-9 at the Ramkota in Rapid City, May 10 at the Mueller Center in Hot Springs, and May 11 at St. James Church in Edgemont (1 to 8 p.m. each day, with a break from 5 to 6 p.m.). Anyone can have their say.

So if you have an opinion about the proposed uranium mine and waste disposal, bring it to the hearings, or just come to observe. We are, in this case, part of the permit process.

Lilias Jarding is a member of the Rapid City-based Clean Water Alliance.

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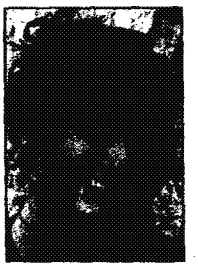
Julianne Thomsen —"I'll remember how great my friends looked all dressed up and how much hard work the parents put in so we could have a nice prom."

Logan Block — "I will remember it as being one of the most decorated ones I have been to so far. It was an amazing night spent with all my closest friends."

Skylar Dekker — "I will think about how awesome my date was and how I couldn't have had a better group of friends to go with."



Tori Glazier — "I will remember how I had a blast at prom making memories with my best friends."

Your Viewpoint

Custer County Chronicle
April 26, 2017

apitol

ıfire with the intention of pping the gunfire by tak- ; out (killing) the shooter. e officer will be able to tinguish the bad guy, bably because the good ooter will look like palong Cassidy or Gene try, or even maybe a bit : John Wayne type. Or l the officer just take out h shooters?

The governor in this ision made the right ice to veto the propos-

This subject reminds me the Johnny Cash song: on't take your guns to n son, (or the Capitol or courthouse). Leave your s at home, (or at the al detector and screen-).

Screening to prevent s in the Capitol or court- se would seem to be the st solution for all.

John D. Murphy
Custer

It doesn't make sense

Dear Editor,

Renewable energy is now cheaper than coal, oil, gas and nuclear power. Since October 2012, U.S. nuclear plant owners have closed about a dozen reactor units.

The EPA issued draft permits to Powertech/Azarga for a proposed in-situ leach uranium mine in Custer and Fall River Counties that proposes to operate for 10 years. No such mine has been successfully cleaned up, despite sincere efforts. When the mining ends the pumps are turned off, and the heavy metals such as uranium which were loosened by the mining solution continue flowing through the aquifer.

Yes, in-situ leach mining occurs within an aquifer. In this case, mining would occur in the Inyan Kara aquifer via 4,000 wells. Waste would be injected into the Minnelusa aquifer. People are using the water in these aquifers!

Do we risk precious water for a type of mining that historically has depleted and contaminated water in exchange for a handful of jobs to provide fuel to the dying nuclear power industry?

Or do we think beyond 10 years and reserve our water to support the sustainable economic growth that is happening in the Black Hills? The economics of uranium mining do not make sense here.

Gina Parkhurst
Custer

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